

WEALDSTONE OR BARNET AWAY FOR WANDERERS

WYCOMBE Wanderers have missed out again on a home draw in the F.A. Trophy. They must travel to the winners of the Wealdstone v Barnet replay for their first round tie on January 15.

The Blues have gone out at the first hurdle in this competition for the last two years, losing at Ilford and Slough Town. Their F.A. Cup performances won them exemption from the qualifying rounds this season but they know that another early exit from the Trophy will probably mean them having to qualify next year.

Barnet and Wealdstone were due to play last Saturday but had to postpone their game due to the weather. They met on Tuesday evening and fought out a 1-1 draw at Underhill, scene of Wycombe's 3-0 defeat in the F.A. Cup five years ago in a replay.

Both clubs play in the Southern League, Wealdstone in the Premier Division and Barnet in Division One South. And the clubs are experiencing contrasting fortunes this year.

Wealdstone are four places from the bottom of the table in the Premier but enjoyed a useful F.A. Cup run. They went out 1-0 at Elm Park, Reading, who of course, then beat Wanderers 2-1 in the next round. The Stones' most dangerous player is striker George Duck, a consistent goalscorer in the league.

Barnet in contrast, are fourth in Division One and have games in hand on the leaders. They have won all seven league games at Underhill and under former player Billy Meadows, now manager, they look good bets for promotion.

Meadows has signed several new players this season amongst them former England and Arsenal full back Bob McNab, who now operates in midfield. Marvin Hinton, the ex-Chelsea centre back, makes up a formidable central defence with Walter Lees, the former Watford player. Top goalscorer this season is John Fairbrother with 16 to his credit.

NEXT GAME

Tuesday's game saw Wealdstone go one up with a scrambled goal from centre half Keith Lawrence but Barnet hit back to dominate the second half and equalised with a Gary Williams goal. The replay is set for Monday, January 3.

The Blues' next game is on Tuesday when they meet Croydon at home in the Rothmans Isthmian League. Kick off is 3 pm.

Wanderers are likely to be without Dylan Evans, who still has his arm in plaster after breaking a bone in his hand against Reading. There is also a doubt over Mick Holifield, who damaged knee ligaments in the same game.

Croydon have relied on the team that went unbeaten in the league last season when they won promotion. Their final playing record was: P42, W28, D14, L0, F81, A27, Pts98. This term, however, the London club have struggled to get among the goals.